QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS IN AN INTERVIEW

Interviewers will typically ask you if you have any questions for them after they finish asking you questions. You should always have questions prepared to ask during this portion of the interview. These questions should relate to the specific requirements of the job and/or should show you've done research into the organization. Avoid asking questions that have an obvious answer through basic research of the company. The list below provides some sample questions to consider asking in the interview.

ABOUT THE JOB

• What are some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this role?
• What do you consider to be the most challenging aspect(s) of this job?
• How is performance measured and reviewed?
• What are some objectives you would like to see accomplished in this role?
• What would the first 2-3 weeks look like? What initial duties would I have and how would they change over time?
• What is your method of training and orienting new employees?
• Can you describe a typical day for someone in this position?
• What is the top priority for someone who accepts this job?

ABOUT THE COMPANY/DEPARTMENT

• How many employees are in this department?
• Who are the other persons with whom I would work in this position?
• With what other key individuals/groups does this person interface within the company, community, and beyond?
• Could you explain your organizational structure to me? Where does this position fit in the organization?
• Can you describe your management style?
• How would you describe your work environment or office culture?
• What drew each of you to this company and what keeps you here?
• What is the company’s policy regarding ongoing training, professional development, and education so that employees can keep up with their skills or acquire new ones?

ABOUT THE FUTURE

• What are the company’s future growth/expansion plans?
• What are some major changes currently happening in the industry, and how is the company responding?
• What do you think is the greatest opportunity facing the organization in the future? The biggest threat?
• In a year from now, if offered this role, what accomplishments would make you know you selected the right candidate?
• Is there anything I can do now to best prepare me for the role if selected?
Be aware that there are also questions that should be avoided in the interview.

QUESTIONS TO AVOID ASKING AN EMPLOYER DURING AN INTERVIEW

- **What is the salary for this job?**
  - Do not ask about salary until the interviewer has raised the subject! This may not happen until the second interview or until a job offer is made.
  - As curious as you may be, you must be patient or risk leaving the impression that you are more interested in the money than in adding value to the organization.
  - Waiting to discuss the topic until a job offer is extended may grant you more negotiating power regarding salary than if discussed at an earlier point while the employer is still considering other candidates for the position.

- **How much vacation and sick leave will I get?**
  - Asking about these issues makes it seem as if you are asking for time off before you have even obtained the job.
  - You should be briefed on benefits at the appropriate time. If not, you may ask, “What are the benefits associated with this position?” when the salary issue has been raised by the employer. You could also consider checking the organization’s website for information regarding benefits.

- **How quickly could someone in this position be promoted?**
  - This question is impossible to answer. Promotion depends on timing, such as growth and turnover, and your performance. This cannot be determined in advance of an evaluation of how you would perform in this role. A question that could be asked instead would be “are there opportunities for advancement with this company?” or “what are some opportunities for growth with this organization?”

- **Is there the possibility of working from home some days?**
  - If the position involves remote work, this will be indicated in the job description.
  - If it is clear that this position is intended to be filled on site, this questions can raise concern about why you asked to work from home.
  - Typically, this would be a question you could ask after 6 months to a year with the company.

- **So, did I get the job or what?**
  - The employer will typically update you on the status of their decision sometime after the interview.
  - In order to gain an understanding of when you might be notified of their decision, it can be helpful to ask, “what are the next steps in the hiring process?”
  - Always wait for the employer to provide this information rather than asking this question. If you have not been contacted by the employer by the time they indicated, or within two to three weeks, it can be helpful to follow up by asking if there is anything else you can provide them in this process.